

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SIBOLGA CITY GOVERNMENT PREVENTION MEASURES ON COVID-19 IN CENTRAL TAPANULI

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ABSTRACT

Background: Public health in social interventions is critical to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 virus. The Sibolga city government has implemented a variety of public health and social measures to control the pandemic. This study aimed to describe the extent to which the community members in Sibolga city followed the government policy on COVID-19 prevention measures.

Subjects and Method: This was a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted in Sibolga, North Sumatra in 2020. A total of 100 community members was selected at random for interviews. The dependent variables included various COVID-19 preventive measures, such as facemask wearing, physical distancing, handwashing, consistency in following government recommendations, social distancing, and staying at home. The data were collected by questionnaires and described in percentage by SPSS.

Results: Various COVID-19 preventive measures had been taken by Sibolga community members as follows: facemask wearing (96.0%), physical distancing (89.5%), handwashing (94.5%), consistently following government recommendation (95.6%), social distancing (88.1%), and staying at home (35.6%).

Conclusion: The Sibolga community members have followed the Sibolga city government policies on controlling COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: prevention measures, COVID-19, government efforts, community members

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BACKGROUND

Currently, Indonesia and the rest of the world have not been separated from the grip of the corona virus or COVID-19. Like other respiratory illnesses, COVID-19 can cause mild symptoms including runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. About 80% of cases recover without the need for special treatment. About 1 in every 6 people may develop severe illness, such as with pneumonia or difficulty breathing, which usually develops gradually. Although the mortality rate for this disease is still low (around 3%), older people and people with pre-

existing medical conditions (such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease) are usually more susceptible to becoming ill. critical. Looking at developments to date, more than 50% of confirmed cases have been declared improved, and the recovery rate will continue to increase (Ministry of Health, 2020).

In tackling the Corona Epidemic or COVID-19, our Government has made various efforts and policies in order to break the chain of the spread of this virus or outbreak. Apart from using masks at all times and washing hands as often as possible, our Government

chooses to practice social distancing rather than doing a massive lockdown. amount to break the chain of spread of the corona virus. Of course our government has the right reasons for choosing this option. This is in line with Mashabi's research (2020) which states that the high mobility of society and a dense population causes the spread of positive cases of COVID-19 in the Indonesian province to be relatively fast.

Socialization is an important and inseparable component in the response to public health emergencies, both locally, nationally, and internationally (COVID-19 Guidelines, 2020). Zhang et al. (2020) state that non-pharmaceutical interventions are prioritized, such as community prevention strategies to slow transmission, particularly among high-risk populations. In his research, Utami (2020) also stated that COVID-19 transmission can be slowed down through proper social distancing management.

Sibolga City as an area that fully supports the central government's policy in breaking the chain of the spread of COVID-19 has made various efforts. From the results of interviews with several village heads in the Sibolga sub-district and almost all sub-districts throughout the city of Sibolga, they said that apart from the formation of the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling COVID-19, various activities have also been carried out from the sub-district level to the neighborhood level (RT/RW). These efforts include providing cash assistance, basic necessities as well as socializing the 3M Program (wearing masks,

washing hands and maintaining distance).

Good public attitudes will be implemented consistently if there are strict rules from policy makers and good role models from public figures. So it is important in shaping people's attitudes that are supported by government policies (Firda and Haksama, 2020). The prevention and control of COVID-19 must be placed at the top priority in all government policies (General Guidelines, 2020). Readiness of Regional Governments in Implementing Productive and Safe Communities COVID-19 is intended so that regional governments can provide maximum service to the community in the era of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The success of efforts to handle COVID-19 is highly dependent on the role of the community. However, community participation is highly expected in breaking the chain of spreading this virus (Law No. 440-430, 2020). The understanding and awareness of the people of Sibolga regarding the prevention of COVID-19 is still low. In addition, the level of community compliance to carry out social distance is also still low, because it is still seen that residents move out of their homes for recreational purposes, sitting in groups, gathering without wearing masks or keeping their distance, so that possible deployment is still a huge task. Promotive action to increase public understanding is needed in order to increase their knowledge about self-isolation in accordance with standard operating procedures (Sagala et al., 2020).

SUBJECTS AND METHOD

1. Study Design

This study uses a quantitative method with a correlation design which aims to determine the relationship between two or several variables. The study was conducted in the city of Sibolga, North Sumatra Province. The initial survey, data collection for research arrived in August and the preparation of the results seminar was completed in September 2020.

2. Population and Sample

The technique used in the sampling of the population is random sampling, with the consideration that the population/community who are respondents are in the same area, namely the people of Sibolga City which are relatively homogeneous.

3. Study Variable

The dependent variable is knowledge, attitudes and actions in preventing COVID-19. The independent variable is the efforts of the Sibolga City government (communication, disposition, resources, and bureaucratic structure).

4. Operational Definition of Variable

Communication is a process of delivering information about local government public policies in preventing COVID-19 in Sibolga City to respondents.

Disposition is a government action in implementing the COVID-19 prevention policy in Sibolga City.

Resources is a policy of the local government's ability to prevent COVID-19 in Sibolga City.

The Bureaucratic Structure is an implementing agency for local government policies in preventing COVID-19 in the city of Sibolga.

Knowledge is the level of public understanding of the prevention of COVID-19.

Attitude is an evaluative statement of the subject regarding the prevention of COVID-19.

Actions are actions that are part of preventive behavior against COVID-19.

5. Study Instruments

This study uses a questionnaire instrument with a Guttman measuring scale with categories (1) Bad if the score is 0-5, and (2) Good if the score is 6-10.

6. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed univariately and bivariately using the Pearson correlation test with the help of SPSS software.

RESULTS

Various COVID-19 preventive measures had been taken by Sibolga community members as follows: facemask wearing (96.0%), physical distancing (89.5%), handwashing (94.5%), consistently following government recommendation (95.6%), social distancing (88.1%), and staying at home (35.6%).

Table 1 shows that disposition ($r= 0.39$; $p< 0.001$) and bureaucratic structure ($r= 0.72$; $p< 0.001$) were associated with the Sibolga City government's COVID-19 prevention behavior, and these results were statistically significant. Meanwhile, communication ($r= -0.44$; $p= 0.660$) and resources ($p=-0.45$; $p= 0.655$)

decreased the Sibolga City government's COVID-19 prevention behavior

and this result was not statistically significant.

Table 1. Results of bivariate analysis of the relationship between disposition, bureaucratic structure, communication, and COVID-19 prevention behavior in Sibolga City (n = 100)

Government Decree	r	P
Disposition	0.39	0.001
Bureaucratic Structure	0.72	0.001
Communication	-0.44	0.660
Resource	-0.45	0.655

DISCUSSION

The determinants of the Sibolga City government have sub-variables consisting of four variables which include communication, disposition, resources, and bureaucratic structure.

In the disposition variable and bureaucratic structure in Sibolga City in an effort to prevent COVID-19 behavior, it was found that the Sibolga City government's efforts which include the division of tasks from the Camat to the head of the neighborhood (rt/rw), the implementation of a curfew in collaboration with Forkopimda (the Regional Leadership Coordination Forum) is considered good by the people of Sibolga City in an effort to break the chain of the spread of the corona virus that is currently engulfing all corners of the world. This is in accordance with Faradilla's (2021) research that the COVID-19 response strategy is closely related to the government's efforts to cooperate with various institutions and the role and participation of the community in their care.

One of the roles of government communication in the prevention of COVID-19 can be seen in policies and regulations regarding the prevention of the COVID-19 pandemic (Marcolino et al., 2020). This can be shown by the

decrease in the number of positive cases of COVID-19.

The Sibolga City Government stated that the first case of COVID-19 was on March 2, 2020, then several policies and strategies were taken. Some of these policies include banning all flights to and from China, stopping the granting of visas for Chinese nationals to travel to the Sibolga City area, limiting travel to and from several areas such as Medan, Padangsidempuan, Padang and several areas as well as closing schools, campuses, including Several government offices and private companies, to closing entertainment centers have been carried out by the Sibolga City Government to control the extent of the spread of COVID-19. This policy replication effort was taken by the Sibolga city government as a form of government sensitivity to policies that have been formulated and implemented in accordance with regulations made by the Indonesian Ministry of Health.

The Sibolga City Government on the health side provided personal protective equipment (PPE), masks, medicines, and converted several lecture buildings into special hospitals for handling COVID-19. The Sibolga city government also optimizes

COVID-19 tests, both through rapid tests and through PCR. The goal is that the spread of the corona virus can be localized so that the government has a map of the distribution of COVID-19. These policies were taken because the Sibolga city government is aware that the COVID-19 outbreak is a national-scale disaster that must be resolved in an extraordinary (extra-ordinary) way. Therefore, it is not surprising that the President of Indonesia issued Presidential Decree (Keppres) Number 12 of 2020 concerning the Designation of Non-Natural Disasters that Cause Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as National Disasters on April 13, 2020, although at a very late date due to the number of infected people has reached 6,760 people and 590 others have died (Andrews et al., 2020).

If we look at the lack of communication (borrowing Edward III's term) and the lack of synchronization of coordination between the Sibolga City government and the community (a network that is not properly monitored), this also occurs in the implementation of the regional isolation policy (lockdown) in the community. In mid-March 2020, the local government has decided not to adopt regional isolation because it will disrupt human migration and hamper the residents' economy. Therefore, the decision was to implement social or physical distancing in the Sibolga City area.

The lack of provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) is an indication of the weak communication and coordination (networking) between Sibolga city government institutions, especially institutions

that are closely related to the issue of handling COVID-19. The most painful impact of the lack of provision of PPE by the government is the death of national heroes (read: doctors and nurses) in many areas. Until August 20, 2020. Likewise with the City of Sibolga, many residents were detected as infected with the corona virus until at one time made Sibolga City a dangerous status zone in the spread of COVID-19. One of the reasons for this happening is that people don't believe in the occurrence of COVID-19. The government should be able to swiftly provide PPE, especially for its citizens, as a substitute for PPE that is difficult to obtain.

One other problem that has brought the attention of the Sibolga City government to being less successful in controlling the spread of the corona virus is the indifference (not to say indifference) of citizens to government appeals or instructions. This problem can be seen from the crowds of people gathering in coffee shops, cafes, malls, cinemas, or places that have been banned by the government. Even though since the beginning the government has given directions to residents to do physical or social distancing to keep their distance from other people. This is because of the spread of the corona virus, one of which is, through saliva splashes. If people do not keep their distance, and it is known that the person they are talking to is infected or a carrier (carrier) of the virus, then it has the potential to infect other people and spread it again to third, fourth, and so on. Therefore, physical or social distancing is one way out to inhibit the

spread of COVID-19. The government's directives are only directions when most of the people are still huddled together in terminals, stations, shelters, markets, and others. Residents seem not to worry about the virus because they are more concerned with their daily activities.

Similar to physical or social distancing, the government's appeal for the use of masks is often violated by the wider community. The invitation to wash hands after leaving the house was also not followed by many residents. Why does this happen? Looking at the conditions on the ground, there are at least three possibilities why the people are not indifferent to the government's direction. People's ignorance of the very deadly danger of COVID-19. This ignorance is due to the weak socialization carried out by the Sibolga city government, including the local government from the sub-district level to the village level. The Sibolga city government is not optimal in socializing the need for clean and healthy living, including using masks and washing hands frequently because some mediums can be a carrier for the spread of the corona virus. For example, the study of Doremalem et al. (2020) explained that the corona virus can survive for hours to days on different mediums. Corona viruses can survive several hours in the air, survive 4 to 8 hours in copper medium, survive 24 hours in cardboard medium, and can also survive up to 3 days in plastic and stainless-steel media (Doremalem et al., 2020). This virus resistance must be anticipated with a clean and healthy way of living.

The determination of the Sibolga city government implemented by the government in dealing with COVID-19 such as the Health Protocol policy contained in the Decree of the Minister of Health Number HK.01.07/MENKES/382/2020 aims to suppress the spread of COVID-19 in Jakarta. However, the number of COVID-19 cases in the city of Sibolga is still under controlled conditions. However, the policies and efforts made by the Sibolga city government have not been able to suppress the spread of COVID-19 in the city of Sibolga. Policies and efforts made in handling are still experiencing obstacles originating from the community's non-compliance with health protocols and Health Protocol policies implemented by the Sibolga city government. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate policies through good governance between the Sibolga city government and its people to create solid and professional cooperation and coordination in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sibolga city government and the community together can convey a comprehensive message both through various media regarding the pandemic situation, the consequences faced, and the anticipation that must be done. In addition, the author sees the need for strict and real punishments for violators in the form of fines large enough to cause a deterrent effect for people who violate the policies and rules that have been applied.

This study concludes that the disposition and bureaucratic structure of the Sibolga City government has a relationship with COVID-19 prevention behavior in Sibolga City. It is

recommended that there is a need for collaboration between the government, health services and the community environment in carrying out strategic communication efforts and sustainable health education in the hope of changing people's behavior, especially when facing the COVID-19 pandemic. This research still has many limitations, so that more in-depth research is needed regarding the impact or response of the community when facing COVID-19.

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